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ABSTRACT

This booklet is designed to sensitize and inform the scuba diving instructor on appropriate attitudes and successful methods for teaching scuba diving to persons with physical disability. It addresses misconceptions about people with disabilities and the importance of effective two-way communication and mutual respect between instructors and persons with impairments. A list of appropriate language to use in describing a person with a disability is provided, along with definitions of impairments, disabilities, and handicaps. The different needs of people with spinal cord injuries, limb deficiencies, and cerebral palsy are then discussed. Tips are provided for transferring divers in wheelchairs to a swimming pool, the beach, or a dive boat. The need to modify the traditional format for scheduling scuba classes to accommodate certain participants with disabilities is also addressed, as well as the need for divers to exercise vigorously, regularly, and frequently in order to maintain their required level of physical fitness for diving. (CR)

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